

# CAL POLY

M A G A Z I N E

SOAR  
INTRODUCING CAL POLY







IN THIS EDITION

COVER STORY

THE FINEST OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

SOAR Leaders Introduce New Freshmen and Parents to Cal Poly

EDITOR’S NOTE

Introducing Cal Poly

BUDGET UPDATE

Vice President Larry Kelley Offers an Update on the State’s Budget

AROUND CAMPUS

WOW 2012 in Photos

FREEDOM AND FLIGHT

Cal Poly Alum and Tuskegee Airman Art Hicks on Education and Civil Rights

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Two Engineering Grads Helped Build the Mars Rover; a Business Grad Produced an Indie Film; and More

UNIVERSITY NEWS

Cal Poly’s Accreditation is Renewed; New Deans and a Police Chief are Named; and More

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

Business Alums Matt Canepa and Pat Pezet Have Created an Alternative to Chewing Tobacco

POLY DAYS

A Look at the University’s First Annual Alumni Weekend, Held in July

LOOKING AHEAD

Reflections from Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong



Grinds

Buisness grads Matt Canepa and Pat Pezet have a new kind of chew for Major League Baseball players.

Read More



WOW slideshow

See images from this year’s Week of Welcome, as new students got to know their university and their community.

Read More



Alumni in the News

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Read More



Looking ahead

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Read More





In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

THE FINEST OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

SOAR Leaders Welcome New Students to the Cal Poly Family

By Matt Lazier

When it comes to new-student orientation at Cal Poly, Week of Welcome and Open House get most of the attention.

But after new students choose to come to Cal Poly and before they arrive on campus ready to move in, make new friends, get to know their community and start their college experience, they are introduced to the inner workings of the university through SOAR.

Held throughout the summer, SOAR gives new students and their parents an overnight visit to Cal Poly and the chance to tour the campus and find out about various programs and support services. And it gives them the tools and information they need as the soon-to-be freshmen prepare to undertake a major transition in their lives.

Open House in the spring is the time when potential new students visit and we figure out whether we're a good fit for each other, said Stephan Lamb, Cal Poly's interim director of Student Life and Leadership (which includes the Orientation Programs office). But SOAR that's really the first chance we get say to these new students, Welcome to the Cal Poly family.

And appropriately, the people charged with making this first impression on new students are Cal Poly students themselves.

There are about 70 undergraduate student leaders in SOAR who welcome incoming students and families, give tours around campus and downtown San Luis Obispo, make presentations on important issues, and try to answer any and all questions these new Cal Poly community members might pose.

Our student leaders embody the model of the bright, driven Cal Poly student, Lamb said. They come from a variety of majors and campus backgrounds. They train hard to become as familiar as they can with as much of the campus as they can, so they can give these new families the information they need.

And most importantly for SOAR, our student leaders share an enthusiasm about the Cal Poly experience and an eagerness to impart that excitement to our new students.

A Delicate Time

SOAR student leaders train for three weeks to get ready for the experience and then take part in nearly a dozen two-day SOAR events throughout the summer. With hundreds of new freshmen, transfer students and family members coming to campus for each two-day SOAR event, Lamb said, student leaders are essential to the program's success.

We depend on our undergraduate leaders, Lamb said. They have to be professional, punctual and prepared. They need to be ready to answer as many questions about Cal Poly as they can. And when they don't know the answer, they have to know how to help steer our new freshmen and their family members to someone who does.

Nonny Okoye, a fourth-year biomedical engineering student, said she and her fellow SOAR leaders are talking to new Cal Poly students and parents at a particularly delicate time.

They're getting ready to make a huge transition in their lives, Okoye said. Plus, Cal Poly starts later than a lot of other universities. So for a lot of these students, their friends have already left and they're just in a kind of limbo, waiting for their turn.

New students are largely concerned with getting oriented to campus, getting out of high-school mode and learning how to live independently.

With the students, you get some serious questions, said Parisa Crane, a fourth-year nutrition major. Mostly, they want to know about classes, campus activities, sports. With parents, it's mostly about safety. They want to make sure their child is going to be safe here.



SOAR leader Parisa Crane talks with incoming freshmen. (Photos by Laura Dickinson)



SOAR leader Scott Kjorlien speaks with a parent on the bus trip to explore downtown San Luis Obispo



SOAR leaders Scott Kjorlien and Justin Bautista gather their groups for a tour of downtown.

Added fellow SOAR leader and fifth-year geography/anthropology major Scott Kjorlien, They want to make sure their student can come here, be happy and find their niche.

To that end, SOAR leaders help give presentations to parents and students on matters such as academics, time management, alcohol and hazing. And new this year, SOAR leaders are presenting new students with The Mustang Way, an ideology developed by Athletics and embraced by the university overall that details the character traits expected of a Cal Poly student.

Cal Poly Pride

Orientation Programs administrators and their student leaders agree on what it takes to be an effective SOAR leader and make that good first impression.

You need to be friendly and easy to get along with, Crane said, and you need to be able to show your enthusiasm for Cal Poly. That Cal Poly Pride can be contagious.



It also helps to draw out the sometimes-shy new students and get them participating and asking questions. That's important, said Kjorlien; where WOW leaders spend several days with new students and keep in touch with them throughout their first year, SOAR leaders have only two days to make an impression.

SOAR leaders must be mentally agile and prepared for all sorts of questions from new students and parents. And if they don't know the answer to a question, a good SOAR leader will know who to ask to find it.

Every student and every family is different, said Justin Bautista, a fourth-year mechanical engineering major. We just need to give them the tools to solve whatever problems they might encounter and introduce them to the resources they have on campus.

Most importantly, he added, we just need to be honest. Students and parents want to hear about our experiences at Cal Poly.

That willingness and desire to share their own stories and help ease the transition of newer students draws many SOAR leaders to the job.

Crane who transferred to Cal Poly two years ago said SOAR and WOW played a huge part in helping her settle in to campus. She tries to make sure other new students reap the same benefits.

Bautista, though, said he failed to take full advantage of the orientation process. I didn't give WOW my all when I started, and I regretted it later, he said. I missed out on the fun of it.

So I like to be involved and help newer students to not make the same mistake to make sure that they get everything out of the experience they can.

Find out more about the SOAR program online at [here](#).

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#### THE MUSTANG WAY

Pride Responsibility Character

#### WE ARE FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE

Learn by Doing is the foundation of our engaged pursuit of knowledge and scholarly achievement.

#### WE EMBRACE ONE ANOTHER

Mustangs strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, celebrating the positive differences that make us unique.

#### WE ARE ONE COMMUNITY

Personal commitment and participation in the Cal Poly community is the cornerstone of the Mustang experience.

#### WE ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY

Mustangs support one another while also taking pride in accepting personal responsibility, thus strengthening the Cal Poly family.

#### WE LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Mustangs face all actions and decisions with perseverance, honor, and character. As Mustangs, we are united under these principles, honoring those who came before us and inspiring the Mustangs who follow. The privilege of being a Cal Poly Mustang is celebrated for a lifetime.



A SOAR group explores downtown.



SOAR leader Parisa Crane gathers her group during a campus tour.



In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

Editor’s Note

Introducing Cal Poly

The impression made first is often the one that lasts. That’s why the student leaders who participate in Cal Poly’s SOAR summer orientation program play such an important role.

It’s up to them to be the first impression Cal Poly makes on many of its new freshmen and their parents. And as one student leader pointed out, they’re doing their work at a crucial time when incoming students are on the verge of undergoing one of the biggest transitions of their lives.

As we mark the start of a new academic year in this edition of Cal Poly Magazine, we take the opportunity to introduce you to a few of SOAR’s student leaders and get their thoughts on the important and rewarding task they undertake.

And of course, a look at the start of the new school year wouldn’t be complete without some fun and moving images from that other annual orientation rite: Week of Welcome. We also give you a glimpse of the university’s first annual Poly Days Alumni Weekend, which took place in July.

Elsewhere, we introduce you to Art Hicks, a Cal Poly alum and longtime local educator who was also one of the historic Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. And we tell you about Grinds, a company started by two Cal Poly alums that provides a coffee-based substitute for chewing tobacco – one that has been embraced by some of the biggest names in Major League Baseball.

Finally, with this edition, we introduce you to Cal Poly Magazine’s newly redesigned website. While updating the look and feel to match the newly launch Cal Poly site, we also create a new cyberspace presence for our publication that we hope you find attractive, clean and easy to use.

Thank you for reading this online-exclusive edition of Cal Poly Magazine. I hope the stories and multimedia features we present to you in this edition help you stay connected to the campus community and help you keep in mind the transformative work Cal Poly does every day in helping to produce the professionals and leaders of the future.

As always, I welcome your comments, questions and story tips for future editions. Feel free to contact me at [mlazier@calpoly.edu](mailto:mlazier@calpoly.edu).



Matt Lazier  
Editor  
B.S., Journalism, 1997



**Grinds**

Buisness grads Matt Canepa and Pat Pezet have a new kind of chew for Major League Baseball players.

Read More >



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Read More >



**Alumni in the News**

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Read More >



**Looking ahead**

President Jeffrey D. Armstrong talks about the indomitable spirit of the Cal Poly family and the positive momentum that has the university starting the new academic year strong.

Read More >





In This Edition:

- The Finest of First Impressions
- Editors Note
- Budget Update
- Around Campus
- Freedom in Flight
- Alumni in the News
- University News
- Something to Chew On
- Poly Days
- Looking Ahead

UP TO THE CHALLENGE

Cal Poly Maintains Quality Education Amid Budgetary Challenges

By Larry Kelley, vice president, Administration and Finance

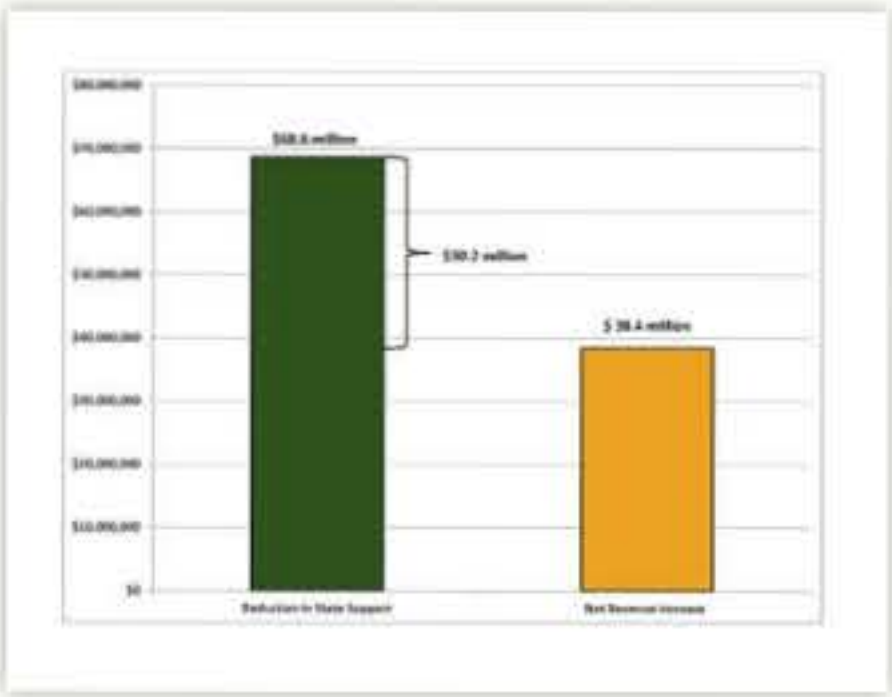
The last five years have brought a watershed of change to state support of public higher education in California. As recently as the late 1980s, the state provided 90 percent of the funding for a college student. Today, that share is less than 40 percent – and could be headed to only 31 percent if the governor’s tax initiative fails in November.

While there has been a gradual shift in funding from the state to the students and their parents since the late 1980s, precipitous changes in the last five years have resulted in state support to Cal Poly decreasing from \$150 million in 2007-08 to a possible \$67 million in the current fiscal year.

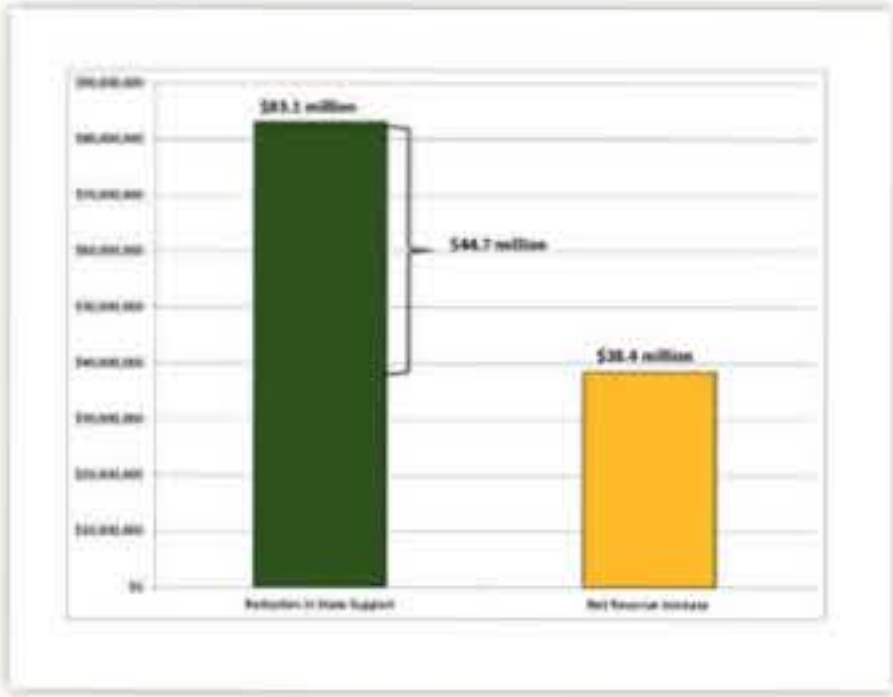
These recent changes have been fast, painful and full of uncertainty. The current fiscal year began July 1, 2012, and we will not know the level of state support until after the November election—nearly halfway into the year.

This uncertainty clearly makes planning a challenge, but Cal Poly has been up to that challenge. We continue to enhance our focus on student success. We have increased graduation rates and worked to maintain predictable enrollment levels focused on our high-quality academic programs as they produce graduates who address the needs of California and the health of the economy.

Students believe in what Cal Poly provides them and have acted to make the future even stronger. Last Spring, the students voted to establish a new fee with a clear message that they wanted to be sure they would have class sections which allow them to progress to their degrees. That new fee will be phased in over a three-year period beginning this year and will generate \$14 million when fully implemented. It already is helping to add sections as well as support to enhance student success.



Cal Poly’s budget gap if the governor’s November tax initiative passes.



The budget gap without support from the November tax initiative.

The CSU and Cal Poly again face the possibility of a mid-year budget reduction. Termed a “trigger cut,” the reduction would be made in the event California voters do not pass the November tax initiative intended to be in place for seven years and increase state sales tax as well as personal income tax on high-income earners. Cal Poly’s share of the trigger cut is estimated to be \$14.5 million. While there has been a shift in funding to the student and their parents, revenue from fee increases is still approximately \$44.7 million short of covering the cuts in state support.

Alternatively, with passage of the November tax initiative and no further reductions for 2012-13 fiscal year, Cal Poly’s state support reduction over the five-year period would total \$68.6 million, reducing the funding gap to \$30.2 million after offsetting fee increase revenue.

Cal Poly will continue to provide quality education despite the budget challenges facing the university and the state of California. The quality of your degree, as well as the degrees of the current students, depends on that. As you might expect, the November tax initiative is extremely important to Cal Poly and the ability to continue to meet our mission and provide the education our students deserve.



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Read More



WOW slideshow

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Read More



Alumni in the News

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Read More



Looking ahead

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Read More





**[Home \(index.html\)](#)**

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**[Table of Contents \(contents.html\)](#)**

## Fall 2012

**In This Edition:**

**Week of Welcome: 2012**

[The Finest of First](#)

[Impressions](#)

[\(soars.html\)](#)

[Editors Note](#)

[\(editor.html\)](#)

[Budget Update](#)

[\(budget.html\)](#)

[Around Campus](#)

[\(wow.html\)](#)

[Freedom in Flight](#)

[\(hicks.html\)](#)

[Alumni in the News](#)

[\(alumninews.html\)](#)

[University News](#)

[\(news.html\)](#)



<http://calpolynews.calpoly.edu/slideshows/WOW12/>



contest (contest.html)

## Contest

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## WOW slideshow

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(alumninews.html)

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(alumninews.html)

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[Read More \(alumninews.html\)](#)



(president.html)

## Looking ahead

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[Read More \(president.html\)](#)





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# WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



WOWies took part in a slew of fun get-ta-know-ya games at the WOW-a-Rama event. (Photo by Laura Dickinson)

14 / 14

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WOWies help paint a wall in the Habitat for Humanity ReStore building during one of WOW's two service days. (Photo by Laura Dickinson)



## WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



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12 / 14

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President Jeffrey D. Armstrong lent a helping hand to students and family members moving into residence halls to start WOW. (Photo by Brittany App)



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10 / 14

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## WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



New Cal Poly students are excited to begin their Week of Welcome at a rally to launch the orientation period before the start of the 2012 fall quarter. (Photo by Brittany App)

09 / 14

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# WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



WOWies march through campus on their way to a rally to be assigned to their WOW groups. (Photo by Brittany App)

07 / 14

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WOWies took part in a slew of fun get-ta-know-ya games at the WOW-a-Rama event. (Photo by Laura Dickinson)





President Jeffrey D. Armstrong helps a motivational speaker get WOWies excited for their week and the new academic year. (Photo by Brittany App)

05 / 14

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## WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



WOWies clean up Avila Beach as part of the Week of Welcome's two service days. (Photo by Laura Dickinson)

04 / 14

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03 / 14

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## WEEK OF WELCOME 2012



With the help of their families, new students moved into Cal Poly's residence halls in preparation for WOW and the start of the new academic year. (Photo by Brittany App)

02 / 14

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New Cal Poly students are excited to begin their Week of Welcome at a rally to launch the orientation period before the start of the 2012 fall quarter. (Photo by Brittany App)

01 / 14

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In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

Freedom and Flight

Alum and Tuskegee Airman Art Hicks  
Advocates for Civil Rights and Education

By Stacia Momburg

The flight path of Art Hicks’s life has been long and scenic, taking him through the turbulence of racism and prejudice to literally historic heights as one of the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen.

Through 90 years – as a child in the segregated South, during World War II, through a college education that included a stop at Cal Poly, and throughout an extensive career as an educator – Hicks has never lost his love for flight and has never wavered from his belief in the pursuits of learning and civil rights.

“We need to find it within ourselves to contribute to the whole,” he said, “and we can most effectively do that by first making the best possible contribution to our own selves, through education, questioning, and personal growth. Then, stay on the path that leads to your goal. In fact, head for a goal that is so far out of reach you cannot even imagine what it is.”

Hicks’ exposure to the violence of inequality came early. When he was only 8, he watched as two white men shot and killed a 19-year-old neighborhood friend.

“He was a senior studying theology at Moorhouse College,” Hicks said. “He was pushing a group of us on swings when two men walked up and shot him. I remember thinking that the bullet hole was small and could be patched.”

It was a horrifying event for the youngster – but not out of the ordinary for the time and place, he said. He was born in 1922 in Sparta, Georgia and grew up “among the capes, hoods and cross burnings of the Ku Klux Klan; among lynchings and daily violence,” he said. “No one should have to live that way.”

Hicks learned early on from his mother, though, not to sit idly by. “She was vocal about segregation and inequality,” he said, “and that caused me to always questioned authority.”

He learned to overcome terror with tenacity and a drive to always work for more. And along the way, he discovered his true love – flight.

“There’s a feeling of abandon and freedom that comes with flying. You can escape everything. I miss snap rolls, those were my favorite,” Hicks said, smiling.

A Means to a Better Life

When Hicks was 15, his mother died in childbirth, leaving his father – a chauffeur – as the sole provider for a family of seven. Hicks graduated from high school two years later, but because of their strained financial state, “it was impossible to hope that any of my family would go on to college,” he said. So he worked odd jobs for money.

In 1941 while working as a janitor in the Post Office, he saw a flier that would change his life. The Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) was advertising for aircraft mechanic training. “At the time, it was the only viable option for a black man to get a career going,” he said.

Hicks, long fascinated with aircraft, signed up immediately. He took a bus to Tennessee, but the racism of the times reared its head again; he was turned away because he is black.

A month later, though, the Army Aircorps opened CPTP training at the Tuskegee Institute, and Hicks went to Alabama to train. “I began working on the planes I would eventually fly,” he said.

Hicks worked on Stearman PT-17 aircraft. And as one of the Tuskegee Airmen – the first black military aviators in the U.S. armed forces – he made his way into the history books.

While working on and flying planes, he did what he could to earn college credits. “I took classes at the residential education centers on bases,” he said. And between stints in the military – after his time in Tuskegee, he later enlisted in the Air Force – he enrolled at the University of Dayton for a short time.

Meanwhile, he married his wife, Edith, and started a family. And he remained in the Air Force through the war – continuing to encounter racism as President Harry Truman worked to desegregate the military.

“At that time,” Hicks said, “fighting in the war wasn’t terrifying. Being at home was.” Still, he continued to be vocal about prejudice as he encountered it.

Hicks eventually landed in Lincoln, Neb., where he earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Nebraska, Omaha. While there, he cross-trained in missile guidance and was part of the testing team on the Titan II Nuclear Missile.

Hicks left the service in 1971 and began teaching black studies courses at Cabrillo High School in Lompoc. He also taught Racism in Social Institutions at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria.

He taught for 13 years at Cabrillo. And during that time, he came to Cal Poly, earning his master’s degree in education (with concentration in supervision) in 1975.

“I took upper division classes two days a week to further my classroom skills and get oriented in management,” he said. “Getting my degree at Cal Poly was like every choice I made – a means to a better life. I needed to succeed as a student so that I could be successful as a teacher.”

Now retired from education and living in Lompoc with his wife, Hicks has refocused on his first love: flight. He works with the Lompoc Pilot Association to bring the love of flying to young people who don’t have the financial means or opportunity to fly.

“I want to give them the kind of opportunity that was given to me,” he said, “to experience the feeling that comes with flying.”



Photo courtesy the Lompoc Record



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Buisness grads Matt Canepa and Pat Pezet have a new kind of chew for Major League Baseball players.

Read More



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Read More



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Read More



Looking ahead

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Read More





In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Engineering Alums Help Develop Mars Rover

A pair of Cal Poly grads received media recognition over the summer for their parts in developing the Mars rover Curiosity that NASA landed on the red planet in August. Rius Billing (BS, 1999, Engineering Technology), director of engineering for Alliance Spacesystems, was [featured in the Visalia Times-Delta](#) for his work in helping design a key robotic arm on the rover. And Matthew Bush (BS, Mechanical Engineering, 2008) [was featured in the Santa Maria Times](#) for his work with Helical Products Company developing couplers and springs for the vehicle.



Economics Grad Named Bank VP

[BusinessWire announced](#) that William Sloan (BS, Economics, 1983) had been named an executive vice president of California United Bank. Sloan has been with the bank since its 2005 inception, said President David Ranier, “and his leadership in the Santa Clarita market, as well as his management of real estate lending, has been integral to our success.” [California United Bank](#) has 10 locations throughout Southern California.

Wine-Vit Grad’s Cheese Company Getting Attention

Daniel Turkovich (BS, Wine and Viticulture, 2008) and his Winters Cheese Company were [featured in the Daily Democrat](#) in Woodland, Calif. Winters founded the company in 2009 and opened a tasting room the following year. He hopes to expand soon with his own creamery as his uncommon cheeses continue to earn a positive reputation.

Public Policy Grad Tapped to Lead SLO County

Dan Buckshi (Master of Public Policy, 2009) was chosen as the new chief administrative officer of San Luis Obispo County in July, [New Times reported](#). Buckshi had served as assistant chief administrator since 2009.

Business Grad Produces Indie Film

Vladimir Lisinac (BS, Business Administration, 2005), has produced “Along the Roadside,” a romantic comedy set for a 2013 release through their Metakwon Filmworks partnership, [according to American Banking News](#). Lisinac’s brother, Zoran, directed the film, which stars Michael Madsen (“Reservoir Dogs,” “Kill Bill”). It tells the story of two young people from different parts of the world, whose cultures clash on a journey of self-discovery during the drive to a famous California music festival.

Engineering Grad Now in the Restaurant Business

Matthew Pearce (BS, Civil Engineering, 2007) and his new restaurant Old San Luis BBQ in San Luis Obispo, [were featured in New Times](#). Pearce made the jump to the restaurant business after working as an engineer at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant near San Luis Obispo. While working as an engineering, he honed is barbecue skills selling food at farmers markets and doing catering jobs.

Civil Engineering Grad Named San Carlos Public Works Chief

Jay Walter (BS, Civil Engineering, 1983) has been named public works director for the city of San Carlos, Calif., [the San Mateo Patch reported](#). Walter has held the same position with the city of San Luis Obispo for more than seven years. Before that, he worked for more than two decades for Caltrans, where he rose to the level of district director for the Central Coast area.

Kinesiology Grad Takes Missions Trip to Peru

[The Inland Valley Daily Bulletin reported](#) on Mike Fauce (BS, Kinesiology, 2008) who along with a group of fellow Los Angeles College of Chiropractics students spent the summer raising funds for a mission trip to Peru in August to provide medical care to residents in depressed areas. Fauce and his colleagues hoped their trip would provide aid to the less fortunate while helping give greater positive exposure to their chosen profession.

Computer Science Master’s Grad to Oversee Florida Special Effects Operation

Digital Domain Media Group hired Jim Berney (MS, Computer Science, 1994) to be head of studio at DDMG in Florida, overseeing day-to-day operations of the company’s studio, [BusinessWire reported](#). The studio creates visual effects for feature films, military and medical applications, sports teams and venues, and original animated features. Berney is an academy award nominee who previously played a leadership role at Sony Pictures Imageworks’ New Mexico studio.

Business Administration Grad Named VP of Audio Company

Stephen Thesing (BS, Business Administration, 1985) was named vice president of Marketing and Business Development of Parametric Sound Corporation, [reported Sys-Con Media](#). Thesing brings more than two decades of experience in the development of global marketing programs and revenue streams for high-grown tech companies to Parametric, which is a leading innovator of directed audio products and solutions.



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Read More



WOW slideshow

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Read More



Alumni in the News

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Read More



Looking ahead

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Read More





In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

Univeristy News

Cal Poly's Accreditation Extended  
10 Years - the Maximum Allowed

Citing Cal Poly’s improved graduation rates and praising the faculty and staff’s focus on students despite major reductions in state funding, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) has reaffirmed Cal Poly’s accreditation for the next 10 years, the maximum allowed. In notifying the university of the 10-year extension, the accrediting association commended Cal Poly “for making significant progress in numerous areas” even as the university experienced “major turnover in the top leadership positions.” “WASC’s reaccreditation decision reaffirms Cal Poly’s reputation for excellence and acknowledges the extraordinary value of our Learn by Doing approach,” said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. “This decision recognizes the commitment and excellence of our students, faculty and staff, and reassures our alumni that the value of their Cal Poly degree will continue to appreciate over time.”

[More on Cal Poly's Accreditation Extension](#)

University of Oregon Administrator  
Named New Cal Poly Architecture Dean

Christine Theodoropoulos, head of the Architecture Department at the University of Oregon in Eugene, is the new dean of Cal Poly’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design. Theodoropoulos – who is also a licensed architect and registered professional civil engineer in California – assumed her new post Sept. 1. “Christine’s blend of academic and professional experience as a teacher, university administrator, architect and civil engineer make her an excellent choice to lead our College of Architecture and Environmental Design,” said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. “Her career has embraced the kind of multidisciplinary approaches that will enrich our Learn by Doing programs.”

Theodoropoulos has served as head of the Architecture Department in the University of Oregon’s School of Architecture and Allied Arts since 2003. This includes management and development of curriculum and research initiatives for more than 650 undergraduate and grad students enrolled in seven degree programs in Eugene and Portland, oversight of a \$6.2 million annual budget, and work on fundraising for the department’s programs. She has been a faculty member in the department since 1997.

[More on Theodoropoulos](#)

Washington State University Administrator  
Named New Cal Poly Liberal Arts Dean

Douglas Epperson, a veteran of liberal arts higher education and current dean at Washington State University, is the new dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Cal Poly. He assumed his new post Aug. 15. “Doug understands and appreciates the special niche that Cal Poly has in higher education as one of the nation’s few comprehensive polytechnic universities,” said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. “Doug brings to Cal Poly outstanding experience as both an administrator and a faculty member who also has created an impressive body of scholarship.”

Epperson has served as dean of Washington State’s College of Liberal Arts since 2009. Before Washington State, Epperson spent his career at Iowa State University – beginning as an assistant professor of psychology in 1979 and ending with a five-year stint as associate dean of the university’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

[More on Epperson](#)

Cal Poly Claims National Concrete Canoe  
Championship for Third Year in a Row

For the third consecutive year, Cal Poly won gold at the National Concrete Canoe Competition, considered the America’s Cup of Civil Engineering. The team’s three-peat came in a canoe named Prospector in honor of the California Gold Rush. The American Society of Civil Engineers’ (ASCE) 25th annual National Concrete Canoe Competition was held June 14-16 at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Cal Poly was among 22 top engineering schools at the prestigious event that challenges students’ knowledge, creativity and stamina while showcasing the versatility and durability of concrete as a building material.

The competition was broken into four equally weighted categories: final product, design paper, technical presentation and races. Cal Poly placed first in three categories and third in technical presentation.

“We put in 5,250 hours on the development of Prospector,” said Project Manager Erik Bjornstrom. “We applied innovative and sustainable practices to every aspect of its construction. That included testing 160 different concrete mixes, eliminating a layer of reinforcement and incorporating more sustainable materials.”

[More on the Concrete Canoe Victory](#)

Cal Poly Appoints New Police Chief

Cal Poly has named George Hughes, current leader of the Colorado School of Mines police department, as its new chief of University Police. Hughes will assume his new role Aug. 31. He brings more than 20 years of law enforcement experience to Cal Poly. In his most recent post, he has been responsible for planning, supervising, directing and leading all administrative and operational functions of the full-time police department at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo. At Cal Poly, Hughes will succeed Chief Bill Watton, who is retiring Aug. 24 after 10 years leading University Police. Hughes will oversee the police and parking departments with 45 staff members, including 18 sworn officers, and an annual budget of approximately \$8 million.

[More on Hughes' Appointment](#)

Cal Poly Grad Student Takes First  
with Dairy Products Research

Cal Poly Dairy Products Technology Center Master of Science candidate Lauren Collinsworth took first place in the Sensory Evaluation Division of the Rose Marie Pangborn Memorial Graduate Paper Competition. The competition was held June 25-28 at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) annual meeting in Las Vegas. The presentation was titled “Evaluating the Change in Emotions During the Consumption Experience of Carbonated Orange Soda, Dairy Beverages, and Convenience Cheese.” Collinsworth was one of six finalists selected to present their graduate research.

The award is presented annually by IFT’s Sensory Evaluation Division executive committee to a graduate student for exemplary research and oral presentation of research and is judged on technical merit, writing and organization. “All the presentations were phenomenal, making the competition very difficult,” said Amy Lammert, assistant professor in the Cal Poly Dairy Science Department and chair of Collinsworth’s master’s degree committee.

[More on Collinsworth’s Research](#)





**Class Notes Added to Cal Poly Magazine**

Want to share your stories with classmates? Want to know what others are up to? Cal Poly Magazine will be adding a "class notes" section, beginning with our upcoming Winter 2012 edition, where you can submit your stories. We may feature you in the winter magazine! [Go here to submit](#) your class notes items online now.

**Cal Poly Mustang Daily General Manager Wins Distinguished Adviser Award**

Paul Bittick, general manager of Cal Poly’s Mustang Daily, has been named a 2012 College Media Association Distinguished Adviser Award winner.

The award is given to CMA members who have provided exemplary service to their institutions and the students. Bittick will receive his award at the CMA’s convention in Chicago in the fall.

Bittick has been advising the Mustang Daily student staff for nearly 10 years. He came to Cal Poly after more than 25 years in the newspaper industry. He has worked for daily newspapers in Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley in a variety of roles, including sports writer, sports editor, managing editor and publisher.

[More on Bittick’s Recognition](#)

**Cal Poly Architecture Student Takes First in International Steel Design Competition**

A Cal Poly student pursuing a Bachelor of Architecture degree won first place in an international steel competition. David Heck of Bellingham, Wash., was selected from a field of 303 entries to win one of two first-place awards in the 12th annual Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture/American Institute of Steel Construction Steel Design Student Competition. Heck’s project, “The Paris Market Lab,” won in the Culinary Arts College category.

Jurors called Heck’s submission “a wonderful architectural expression of steel, where steel is both clearly used in the background and also as infill in the foreground.”

[More on Heck’s First-Place Showing](#)



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[Read More](#)



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[Read More](#)



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[Read More](#)



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[Read More](#)





In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions

Editors Note

Budget Update

Around Campus

Freedom in Flight

Alumni in the News

University News

Something to Chew On

Poly Days

Looking Ahead

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

Cal Poly Alums Pitch a Healthy Alternative to Tobacco with ‘Grinds’

By Jo Ann Lloyd

Move over Red Bull. A new energy product is making news, and it comes with a healthy bonus: the potential to get people off chewing tobacco.

Called Grinds, it’s the brainstorm of Cal Poly grads Matt Canepa (B.S., **Business Administration, 2009**) and Pat Pezet (B.S., **Business Administration, 2009**). It’s a flavored energy kick delivered through coffee grinds enclosed in a pouch that fits easily in the cheek, like “chew.”

Grinds earned Canepa and Pezet a first-place win and \$15,000 in prize money in Cal Poly’s 2009 Innovation Quest competition. But its creation came about more by happenstance than design, during summer quarter 2008, their senior year.

“We had procrastinated until the very last moment on a marketing project that was due the next day,” Canepa recalled. “It was about 11 p.m. the night before it was due. We needed caffeine, but no coffee shops were open that late on a Sunday night in summer.

“We looked in the cupboard and found a tin of Folgers coffee grinds. Without thinking, we each stuck a small handful in our mouths, sort of like chewing tobacco.”

The two got the kick they were after – but those pesky coffee grinds weren’t particularly pleasant.

“We worked on our marketing project maybe 30 minutes,” Pezet said, “then we stopped to ponder this other idea.” One nagging problem was figuring out how to contain the grinds.

Not much happened with Grinds until winter quarter, when Canepa and Pezet spotted a poster in the Business Building advertising the Ray Scherr Business Competition. “Have a cool idea?” the poster asked. “Share it with us and get free pizza.”



“Free pizza! It was lunchtime, and we were hungry,” Canepa said. So they went and answered 10 questions, which qualified them to compete.

The product they brought to the competition was a tad crude. They had emptied teabags, refilled them with coffee grinds and hot chocolate granules, and sewn the teabags back up.

But those crude little teabags netted the duo third place and \$3,000, as well as an automatic entrance to Innovation Quest (IQ), an annual competition created to identify and encourage innovative ideas by Cal Poly students and faculty.

Canepa and Pezet pitched Grinds to a panel of IQ judges, and the idea was a first-place hit.

The victory gave them more than money; it provided the impetus to start their company. Early on, they thought Grinds would appeal to professional baseball players, many of whom are known to indulge in “chew.” Both Canepa and Pezet had played baseball during their days at Cal Poly. Neither, though, had been a fan of chewing tobacco.

By 2010 they were ready to take their prototype to Arizona and Florida, the two places where Major League Baseball teams hold spring training. There, the two handed out free pouches to the players, touting Grinds’ energy kick and playing it up as a healthy alternative to smokeless tobacco.

Two pouches deliver a caffeine equivalent of about one-quarter to slightly less than half a cup of coffee. Flavors include mocha, mint chocolate and cinnamon roll, with plans to add vanilla and a robust French roast flavor.

Together, Canepa and Pezet take care of all aspects of the business. Pezet is good at marketing. “He is forward thinking,” Canepa said. “He knows how to develop the business. He’s an optimist.

“I’m more a realist,” he continued. “I deal with the financial aspects. We are polar opposites and can argue over spending \$10. When that happens, we take a break, get a beer, and by the time the beer is gone, we’ve usually compromised right down the middle. We have a good working relationship.”

They say the best part of their jobs is helping people kick the chewing tobacco habit. “San Francisco Giants Manager Bruce Bochy told us we might have saved his life,” Canepa said. ‘I really appreciate you guys passing this out,’ he told me. ‘I’ve been chewing tobacco for years.’ ”

Canepa and Pezet credit Cal Poly for making the improbable possible. “We owe nearly all of our brief success to the professors and alumni who helped us in our final year at Cal Poly,” Pezet said. “As business finance students who played a lot of baseball, we didn’t have much background outside of some number crunching and sports. IQ changed all that in just a matter of weeks. Everyone – the students, alumni and faculty – helps create a lucrative environment for people with ideas to succeed and make them a reality.”

For Canepa and Pezet, the reality now is that Grinds is catching on. “The players are coming to us now,” Canepa said. “They call us ‘the Grinds Guys.’ We love it.”



Photos courtesy of Grinds.



Grinds

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Read More

2



WOW slideshow

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Read More

2



Alumni in the News

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Read More

2



Looking ahead

President Jeffrey D. Armstrong talks about the indomitable spirit of the Cal Poly family and the positive momentum that has the university starting the new academic year strong.

Read More

2



## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



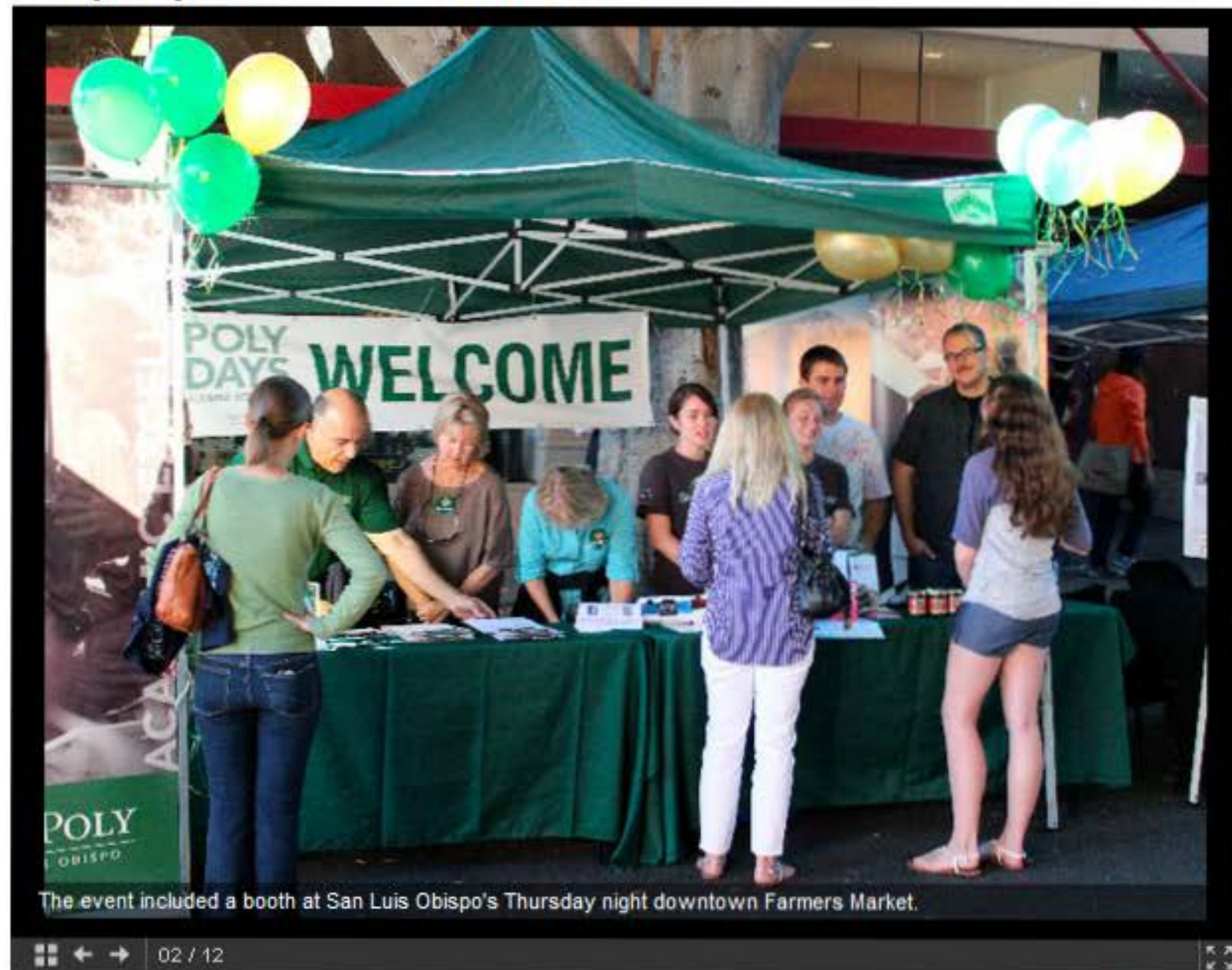
Cal Poly held it's first annual Poly Days Alumni Weekend event on campus July 19-22, 2012.

01 / 12

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## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



The event included a booth at San Luis Obispo's Thursday night downtown Farmers Market.

02 / 12

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03 / 12

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## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



Alumni sat in on "Classes Without Quizzes" throughout the weekend.

04 / 12

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Alumni sat in on "Classes Without Quizzes" throughout the weekend.



## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



Alumni and university officials gathered for a reception at Poly Canyon Village.

06 / 12

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07 / 12

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## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong addressed the gathering at Poly Canyon Village.

08 / 12

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## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



Alumni and university officials gathered for a reception at Poly Canyon Village.

09 / 12

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Poly Days included a barbecue on O'Neill Green.





Family and friends attended a barbecue on O'Neill Green.



## Poly Days Alumni Weekend 2012



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12 / 12

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In This Edition:

The Finest of First Impressions
Editors Note
Budget Update
Around Campus
Freedom in Flight
Alumni in the News
University News
Something to Chew On
Poly Days
Looking Ahead

LOOKING AHEAD WITH  
PRESIDENT JEFFREY D. ARMSTRONG

Strong Momentum as We Launch a New Academic Year

The indomitable spirit of the Cal Poly family is one of this university’s most striking qualities.

Elsewhere in this edition, Larry Kelley, our talented vice president for Administration and Finance, has written about the steep cutbacks in state funding that Cal Poly has been weathering the past five years – and the benefits to Cal Poly if California voters approve Proposition 30 this fall.

Despite the harsh impact of a nearly 45 percent reduction in state funds, our faculty and staff have maintained an unwavering focus on our students’ success and an equally strong commitment to our Learn by Doing approach.

It wasn’t surprising at all, then, when the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) this summer formally extended our accreditation another 10 years, the most allowed under the commission’s guidelines. In so doing, WASC praised the entire campus community “for maintaining strong faculty, staff, and student morale given the major reductions in state funding.”

But here’s what I find even more remarkable: As good as Cal Poly is, our faculty and staff believe we can make Cal Poly even better. That’s what we heard time and again this past spring when our new provost, Kathleen Enz Finken, and I met with a broad array of faculty and staff members, students and alumni.

I’m very grateful for that attitude, because the times we live in are imposing new realities on us. California’s ability to support public higher education is going to continue to be a stiff challenge. To maintain our edge, we’ll need to embrace the ideals of Learn by Doing – carefully examine what’s working and what isn’t; make adjustments; constantly refine; and move forward. Excellence requires continuous improvement.

And that’s why at the beginning of this academic year, at our annual Fall Conference, I urged the faculty and staff to embrace a recommitment to the ideals of Learn by Doing. You can read the full text of my remarks at [here](#).

In my remarks, I outlined a series of actions for addressing our future in a constructive manner, to ensure that we energetically re-examine all that we do and carefully consider what we will change to ensure that Learn by Doing not only survives but thrives in the decade to come.

You will be pleased to know that the WASC re-accreditation affirming Cal Poly’s reputation was but one of a series of good-news items providing us with considerable momentum as we enter a new academic year.

- This fall, we welcome another outstanding class of first-year students. They arrive with the highest collective set of grade-point averages and ACT scores in Cal Poly’s history.
- Last spring, our students approved a new Student Success Fee, providing us with resources to support several hundred classes and labs this year that were otherwise threatened by state budget cuts.
- Thanks to the generosity of our many supporters, we just closed the books on the 2011-12 fiscal year with a 15-percent increase in philanthropic contributions over the prior year.
- And last but not least, U.S. News and World Report, for the 20th consecutive year, declared Cal Poly the best public undergraduate university in the West.

Each of these is a testament to the enduring resiliency, resourcefulness and generosity of the Cal Poly family, and each serves as a reminder that with unity of purpose, Cal Poly has a very bright future indeed.



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Read More >



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Read More >



Alumni in the News

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Read More >



Looking ahead

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Read More >

